

# MRI

**MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)** is a non-invasive diagnostic procedure. This is a valuable medical exam that uses magnetic fields and radio frequencies to generate detailed anatomical images. MRI scans have been performed safely and successfully for over twenty years.

MRI has an advantage over other forms of scanning because it can image different types of tissue. More traditional forms of imaging, such as X-rays, are limited in what kind of tissue they can image. MRI scans can image many more types of tissue without dangerous ionizing radiation.

## Reasons for MRI Scans

MRI exams are performed when people are ill or injured, or when a doctor suspects a medical problem that cannot be detected easily with a routine physical examination. They are non-invasive, meaning that no surgical procedures are required to view your body systems. MRI is also used to obtain specific diagnostic information that hasn't been provided by other imaging technologies such as ultrasound, traditional X-ray, and computed tomography (CT). If you have any questions concerning your exam, please talk to your physician or the MRI technologist.

## What You Should Know About MRI Scans

Simple, safe and fast, MRI exams are among the most advanced medical imaging procedures. This information will answer many of your questions and assist you or your loved ones to better prepare for your upcoming MRI exam.

Our goal is to provide the best possible medical care for you and your family. Your physician will be able to answer specific details about your exam and any other questions you may have.

## What Should I Expect?

A technologist will escort you into the MRI scanning room, where you'll see a table and a large, donut-shaped device called a gantry. The technologist will have you lie on the padded table and make sure that you're comfortable. You'll be asked to lie very still during the scan and hold your breath for a short time to minimize any body movement.

During the scan, you might hear a humming or buzzing noise, but you will not feel anything unusual. You may feel the table move while images are being taken at certain locations of your body. The technologist will monitor you during the entire exam through a window and will communicate with you through an intercom.

The specific details of your upcoming examination will be explained fully by an MRI technologist or your physician.

### **How Long Will the Exam Take?**

The actual scan portion of the exam takes only a few moments. You will be asked to stay still and hold your breath as the MRI scanner acquires images of your body. Depending on the specific exam, the entire exam may take up to 30-45 minutes, as your images are reviewed and a diagnosis is made.

### **Are IVs or Shots Involved?**

Depending on the exam, a solution called "contrast" may be administered with an IV to help improve what the physician can see. Although contrast for MRI does not contain iodine, it is still important to let your doctor know beforehand if you have specific allergies. In addition, the technologist may hook you up to an ECG monitor.

### **Special Notes**

Please **DO NOT** bring the following (or any metal items) into the examination room:

- Jewelry
- Credit cards
- Pocketknife
- Money clip
- Keys
- Watch

Tell the doctor if you have:

- Aneurysm clips
- Metal plate
- Metal pins
- Cardiac pacemaker
- Joint replacements
- If you think you are pregnant

### **After the MRI Exam**

Your images will be carefully analyzed and your physician will be provided a report for his or her review. Your physician will then discuss the results with you.

### **Safety of MRI Examinations**

MRI is a safe and effective diagnostic procedure. It does not use ionizing radiation like an X-ray. Like many other medical image technologies, MRI has been cleared by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

**Information provided by GE Healthcare, [www.gehealthcare.com](http://www.gehealthcare.com).**